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# **INTERPLANETARY FIREBUG**

A Jon Jarl Adventure

#### By Eando Binder

S shop of Lieutenant Jon Jarl of the Space Police Except for the stars, space was always dead black. But suddenly the darkness alked was itt up by a barid galar of flames.

Jon shot his ship forward and gasped. A huge spotaliner with a hindred passengers trapped inside was hurning furloasly. But still more emaning was the amoke-message hanging in space nearby.

#### HA, HA! I DID IT AGAIN) THE SPACE PYROMANIAC!

Jon Jari clenched his fists angrily. He had been on the trail of the Space Pyromanise for some time. The fugitive was a hearties madman who had left a string of burning ships through space. And always he left has mocking simple message behand.

There was one big mystery shout the Space Pyromenae and his gram handiwork. How did he make huge metal ships burn like paper? No ordinary inflammable would work in space where there was no air to aupport combustion. How did he make metal burn whithout oxyran?

But Jon had no time for such pandering. The spaceliner was on fire before has eyes. Hastly he barded into his reduct "Atomion, Spaceliner! You haven't time to get out in Spaceliner! Too haven't time to get out in space source. Double them with water and pump out the hasches-HURRY!"

They obeyed. Soon figures in space suits tumbled out of the batches into free space, waving and foxing helpsayls. But they were free of the burning ship. Jon flung out a long tow rops behind his ship and evided lowly among them. lating them all grab an.

Jon didn't have room for them imade his small ship, but he could keep them from drifting off into empty space to be lost forever. Then he signalled the nearest passing fraght ahip to come and pick them up. An hour later the freighter hove to and the shipwrecked people were all taken aboard safely.

"Thanks, Lieutenant Jaril" the captain of the ill-fated spaceliner radioed from the freighter's radio room, "You saved every life aboard"

As the freighter left, Jon watched the spaceliner burn to ashes. If he could only lay his hands on that Space Pyremaniac . . .

Jon suddenly inapped his fingers and shot his ship toward where the amake-message was fading away. Sure enough, a ship hung there,

"Isthought so!" Jon yelled into hus radio. "Like any firebug, you stay to watch your own handiwork "

"Yes, wasn't it magnificent?" came back in gloating tones. "Red firmes are so beautifull What is portiar than a flerce burning fire in space? Abhihb?"

Jon shuddered. Mad, completely madl "But how do you ast them on fire?" Jon asked, circling closer, within gun range. "How can you make metal burn in speca?"

"Hazas! Let that be my secret?" returned the Space Pyromanizo.

"It's not going to be a secret long," Jon and grimly, "Heava to and surrender, or I'll open fire?"

"Fool!" came back the hisning word. "You won't get me." And with that the other ship rocketed away.

Jon fixed, but the other ship spun sway twistingly, offering no stationary target. The Space Pyrotomaca was a clover point. Grinny, Jon chased after hm, slowly gaining. But just when has thought be had bim, the pyromanise abot a stream of liquid fire from his but toward a huse mence defining eachly.

The liquid fire touched the meteor, and amazidgly, it caught fire! Rock and iron

burned like coal! And without air. Again the mystery of it astounded Jon. But worse, the bright glars blunded him long enough so that he lost sight of his quarty.

"Hassal" came the mocking radio voice : "How did you like that nest trick, Space Concert"

But it was only a slight delay. By means of space rather Jon quickly picked up his quinty's ship again and relamitesly hounded free it. He had to be that space florbug?

They were soon among the astardida, tiny worlds scattered in all directions. The other ship divad and twisted among them, but Jon kept on his teall and was finally within gun range. He opened fire.

A snarl came back from his enemy. "The chase has been fun, but I see IJi have to get rul of you now-by satting your ship on fire?"

Liquid fire shot back from the pyromanist's ship. Jon alertly swung aside, but the stuff spread out widely. Some of it splashed on Jon's hull despite his best dodging. Jastantly, his whole ship shet up in firms.

"Great jupiter!" gasped Jon, slamming on his space suit. "Twe got to abondon ship!" He dumped a jug of water over his suit, opened the emergency listch, and leaged out into space. Floating there, he sadly watched his shea hort to motion.

Euckily, there was an asteroid below. Its gravitation caught him and slowly pulled him down. Due to the light gravity, his landing was no worse than a parachute jump. Jon was alive and safe-or was he?

Down from the sky came the pyromanial's ahip landing nearby. Jon grabbed for his raygun and then remembered be had left it behind when he jumped from his ship so havily. He was beligtes as the Space Pyromania came forward, learing mady.

"You're going to die by fire" he rasped "I'm going to set my biggest fire and burn this whole sateroid up, with you on it"

"You can burn up a whole asteroid?" Jon asked skeptically.

"Sure," informed the space fifebag "You see, what I use is atomic fire IC's a sort of slow christ reaction of atoms. And since everything in the universe is in mode of atoms, everything is a fuel to atomic fire! Stone, steel, even water-atomic fire burns everything!"

The pyromaniac then took a small liquidfre projector in his hand and shot it at a rock. The rock bupt into flammal And the flamma slowly began apreading in all directions, eximp up and and dirt and vegetation!

"It will spread rapidly and soon consume the whole asteroid?" yelled the pyremanize, reaning for his ship "I'll watch it from space?"

But the ship did not rise. A moment later, he staggered out, his face ashen. "The motor won't start?" he acreeched. "I must have landed too hard and jarred something lease! I'm marconed hard-mo-mo?"

"Well," said Jon haggardly. "Seems I have company as I go up in emoke! Your own foreran raucht you!"

Screaming in mortal fear, the pyromaniac ran, as if to outrun the atomic fire which new locked greedily near them. The wall of flame roared after hum, Gasping and choking, he saw to one breach but.

"The Space Copl He was caught in the farmes! But there's no escape for me, anyway! No matter where I sun, the atomic fire will reach, burning up the whole asteroid"

But mintculously, his own thip suddenly darted down from above, trailing a rope. He grabbed it and was yanked safely within-by jos. jasil

RAN to your ship." Jon explained. "There was just a rocket signifiant wire loose' So we're safe Luckily that asteroid was unshibited, so let it burn But you won't see it burn, chum."

Jon's fist cracked on the madman's chin. Rearing hum.

Out in space. Joil alove new the incredible sight of a small world burning to sakes. Bur it would be the last fire even set by the Space Pyromethiac!

THE END

Follow the adventures of JON JARL in CAPTAIN MARYEL ADVENTURES!

CAPT. MARVEL











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CAPT. MARVEL IN TH OLD ENOUGH DOPEY DANNY RECAUSE MY UNCLE WAS HOW BECAUSE MY UNCLE WAS AN ADMIRAL IN THE NAVY DURING THE WAR AND HE WENT CROSS-EVED TRYING TO OREY ORDERS! YOU LIKE THE HE WAS TOLD COASP













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